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Sustainable development: sustainable mountain development

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Sustainable mountain development

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 55/189 of 20 December 2000, 57/245 of 20 December 2002, 58/216 of 23 December 2003, 59/238 of 22 December 2004, 60/198 of 22 December 2005, 62/196 of 19 December 2007, 64/205 of 21 December 2009, 66/205 of 22 December 2011 and 68/217 of 20 December 2013, entitled "Sustainable mountain development",

Reaffirming its resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", in which it adopted a comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centred set of universal and transformative Sustainable Development Goals and targets, committed to working tirelessly for the full implementation of the Agenda by 2030, recognized that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, and committed to achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions — economic, social and environmental — in a balanced and integrated manner, building upon the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals and seeking to address their unfinished business,

Recalling that the 2030 Agenda, inter alia, recognizes that economic and social development depends on the sustainable management of our planet's natural resources and confirms the determination of the international community to

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conserve and sustainably use oceans and seas and freshwater resources, as well as forests, mountains and drylands, and to protect biodiversity, ecosystems and wildlife,

Recalling also its resolution 70/299 of 29 July 2016, entitled "Follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the global level",

Reaffirming its resolution 69/313 of 27 July 2015 on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, which is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, supports and complements it, helps to contextualize its means of implementation targets with concrete policies and actions, and reaffirms the strong political commitment to address the challenge of financing and creating an enabling environment at all levels for sustainable development in the spirit of global partnership and solidarity,

Welcoming the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and its early entry into force, encouraging all parties to the Agreement to fully implement it, and encouraging parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change that have not yet done so to deposit their instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, where appropriate, as soon as possible,

Recalling that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, inter alia, recognizes that developing countries with fragile mountainous ecosystems are among the countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change,

Recognizing the Sendai Declaration and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030,[1] adopted at the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, the latter of which, inter alia, identifies a need for focused action in investing in disaster risk reduction for resilience, and in this regard considers it important to promote, at the national and local levels, the mainstreaming of disaster risk assessment, mapping and management into rural development planning and management of, inter alia, mountains, including through the identification of areas that are safe for human settlement, and at the same time preserving ecosystem functions that help to reduce risks,

Recalling the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled "The future we want", Agenda 21,[2] the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg Plan of Implementation),[3] and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020,[4]

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[1] Resolution 69/283, annexes I and II.

[2] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992, vol. I, Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex II.

[3] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex.

[4] United Nations Environment Programme, document UNEP/CBD/COP/10/27, annex, decision X/2, annex.

Recognizing that the benefits derived from mountain regions are essential for sustainable development and that mountain ecosystems play a crucial role in providing water and other essential resources and services to a large portion of the world's population,

Recognizing also that mountain ecosystems are highly vulnerable to the increasing adverse impacts of climate change, extreme weather events, deforestation and forest degradation, land use change, land degradation and natural disasters, from which they recover slowly, and that mountain glaciers around the world are retreating and getting thinner, with increasing impacts on the environment, sustainable livelihoods and human well-being,

Acknowledging that, despite the progress that has been made in promoting sustainable development of mountain regions and conservation of mountain ecosystems, including their biodiversity, the prevalence of poverty, food insecurity, social exclusion, environmental degradation and exposure to the risk of disasters is still high, particularly in developing countries, and access to safe and affordable drinking water and basic sanitation as well as to sustainable modern energy services continues to be limited,

Noting with deep concern that, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations,[5] the number of mountain people in developing countries considered vulnerable to food insecurity increased by 30 per cent between 2000 and 2012, while the total world population of people who live in mountain areas increased by 16 per cent, and in this regard acknowledging the need to prioritize the special and urgent attention needed by mountain areas, including by focusing on the specific challenges they face and the opportunities they provide,

Noting the collaborative efforts of the International Partnership for Sustainable Development in Mountain Regions (Mountain Partnership), launched during the World Summit on Sustainable Development as a multi-stakeholder approach benefiting from the committed support of 57 Governments, 14 intergovernmental organizations, 210 organizations from major groups and five subnational authorities, and engaged in the promotion of sustainable development in its three dimensions — economic, social and environmental — in mountain regions,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on sustainable mountain development;[6]

2. *Encourages* States to adopt a long-term vision and holistic approaches, including through incorporating mountain-specific policies into national sustainable development strategies, increase efforts to end poverty in all its forms and dimensions and address food insecurity and malnutrition, social exclusion, environmental degradation and disaster risk in mountain areas, taking into account that an integrated landscape approach which addresses natural resources management, including watershed and sustainable forest management as well as climate change resilience through multi-stakeholder approaches, can lead to the sustainable development of

[5] Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, *Mapping the Vulnerability of Mountain Peoples to Food Insecurity* (Rome, 2015).

[6] A/71/256.

highland areas, the improvement of the livelihood of the local mountain communities and the sustainable use of mountain resources;

3. *Stresses* the special vulnerability of people living in mountain environments, often with limited access to health, education and economic systems and particularly at risk because of the negative impact of extreme natural phenomena, and invites States to strengthen cooperative action, with the effective involvement and sharing of knowledge and experience of all relevant stakeholders, including traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples living in mountain areas and knowledge of local mountain communities, by strengthening existing arrangements, agreements and centres of excellence for sustainable mountain development, as well as exploring new arrangements and agreements, as appropriate;

4. *Also stresses* the importance of innovative solutions for the diversification of livelihoods and income enhancement opportunities for local mountain communities, and in this regard encourages the promotion of innovative solutions and entrepreneurship within local mountain communities, as appropriate, to end poverty and hunger;

5. *Further stresses* that the traditions and knowledge of indigenous peoples living in mountain areas and the knowledge of local mountain communities, particularly in the fields of agriculture and medicine, should be fully considered, respected and promoted in development policy, strategies and programmes in mountain regions, and underlines the need to promote the full participation and involvement of local mountain communities in decisions that affect them and to integrate indigenous and local knowledge, heritage and values in all development initiatives, in consultation with and with the consent of the concerned indigenous peoples and local mountain communities, as appropriate;

6. *Notes* that women are often the primary managers of mountain resources and the main actors in agriculture, underlines the need for improved access to resources, including land and economic and financial services, for women in mountain regions, as well as the need to strengthen the role of women in mountain regions in decision-making processes that affect their communities, cultures and environments, and encourages Governments and intergovernmental organizations to integrate the gender dimension, including data disaggregated by sex, in mountain development activities, programmes and projects;

7. *Recognizes* that mountains provide sensitive indications of climate change through phenomena such as modifications to biological diversity, the retreat of mountain glaciers, flash floods and changes in seasonal runoff, which are having an impact on major sources of freshwater in the world, and stresses the need to undertake actions to minimize the negative effects of these phenomena, promote adaptation measures and prevent the loss of biological diversity;

8. *Encourages* Member States to collect at the local, national and regional levels, as appropriate, disaggregated scientific data on mountain areas through systematic monitoring, including of trends of progress and change, based on relevant criteria, to support interdisciplinary research programmes and projects and to enhance an integrated and inclusive approach to decision-making and planning, and in this regard takes note of the consideration of the Mountain Green Cover

Index in the global indicator framework for the Sustainable Development Goals and targets;

9. *Encourages* Member States and all relevant stakeholders to continue to increase public awareness with respect to the economic benefits that mountains provide, not only to highland communities but also to a large portion of the world's population living in lowland areas;

10. *Welcomes*, in this regard, the contribution of sustainable tourism initiatives in mountain regions as a way to enhance environmental protection and generate socioeconomic benefits for local communities, including opportunities for productive employment, economic growth and the promotion of local culture and products;

11. *Expresses its deep concern* at the number and scale of natural and man-made disasters and their increasing impact in recent years, which have resulted in massive loss of life and long-term negative social, economic and environmental consequences for societies throughout the world, and recognizes that disaster risk reduction requires a broader and more people-centred preventive approach and an all-of-society engagement and partnership, empowerment and inclusive, accessible and non-discriminatory participation, paying special attention to people disproportionately affected by disasters, especially the poorest, and also taking into account the vulnerability of people living in mountain environments, especially those in developing countries;

12. *Encourages* States to strengthen disaster risk governance, to invest in disaster risk reduction for resilience and to develop and improve disaster risk strategies in mountain regions, including a forward-looking perspective, in order to cope with such extreme events as rockfalls, avalanches, glacial lake outburst floods and landslides, which can be exacerbated by climate change and deforestation, consistent with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030;[1]

13. *Encourages*, in this regard, the increased involvement of local authorities, as well as other relevant stakeholders, in particular the rural population, indigenous peoples, civil society and the private sector, in the development and implementation of programmes, land-use planning and land tenure arrangements, and in other relevant activities related to sustainable development in mountains;

14. *Notes* the importance of ensuring the conservation of mountain ecosystems, including their biodiversity, in order to enhance their capacity to provide benefits that are essential for human well-being, economic activity and sustainable development, and of developing innovative means of implementation for their protection, recognizes in this regard the launching of the Mountain Facility of the Mountain Partnership, and encourages States and other relevant stakeholders to financially support it on a voluntary basis;

15. *Encourages* greater efforts by States, all stakeholders and the international community towards the conservation of mountain ecosystems and the enhancement of the well-being of their local populations, including by promoting investment in infrastructure in mountain areas, such as transport and information and communication technologies, supporting education, extension and capacity-building programmes, especially among local mountain communities and other relevant stakeholders, taking into account the extent of the current challenges they

face and bearing in mind the increased economic, social and environmental costs that inaction might represent for countries and societies;

16. *Underlines* the fact that action at the national level is a key factor in achieving progress in sustainable mountain development, welcomes its steady increase in recent years with a multitude of events, activities and initiatives, and invites the international community to support the efforts of developing countries to develop and implement strategies and programmes, including, where required, enabling policies and laws for the sustainable development of mountains, within the framework of national sustainable development plans, including by building and strengthening institutional capacities, as appropriate;

17. *Encourages* the further undertaking of multi-stakeholder and transboundary initiatives at the national, regional and global levels, where appropriate, such as those supported by all relevant international and regional organizations, to enhance sustainable development in mountain regions, and notes in this regard the numerous initiatives undertaken, including the second World Mountain Forum, held in Cusco, Peru, in May 2014, the third World Mountain Forum, held in Mbale, Uganda, in October 2016, the Mountain Partnership Event on nutrition and mountain products held in Turin, Italy, in September 2016, and the United Nations Environment Programme-led project entitled "Climate change action in developing countries with fragile mountainous ecosystems from a subregional perspective";

18. *Encourages* all relevant entities of the United Nations system, within their respective mandates, to further enhance their constructive efforts to strengthen inter-agency collaboration to promote sustainable mountain development;

19. *Recognizes* that mountain ranges are usually shared among several countries, and in this context encourages transboundary cooperation approaches where the States concerned agree to the sustainable development of mountain ranges and information-sharing in this regard;

20. *Notes with appreciation*, in this context, the Convention on the Protection of the Alps (Alpine Convention)[7] and the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians, which promote constructive new approaches to integrated, sustainable mountain development and provide a forum for dialogue among stakeholders, as well as other transboundary approaches and initiatives such as the Mountain Partnership Andean Initiative, the Scientific Network for the Caucasus Mountain Region, the African Mountains Regional Forum, the European Union Strategy for the Alpine Region and the Zurich process and the Hindu Kush Himalayan Partnership for Sustainable Mountain Development;

21. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth session on the implementation of the present resolution under the sub-item entitled "Sustainable mountain development" of the item entitled "Sustainable development", unless otherwise agreed.

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[7] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1917, No. 32724.